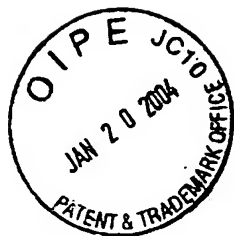


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Joseph S. Iandiorio
Kirk Teska
Jason D. Shanske
Thomas E. Thompson, Jr.
Roy J. Coleman
David W. Poirier

IANDIORIO & TESKA

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW ATTORNEYS

260 BEAR HILL ROAD
WALTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS 02451-1018

Tel: (781) 890-5678
Fax: (781) 890-1150
e-mail: admin@iandiorio.com
web: www.iandiorio.com

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January 16, 2004

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

SUBJECT: Applicant: Houston et al.
 Serial No.: 10/080,053
 Filed: February 21, 2002
 For: SMART CULTURE VESSEL
 Group: 1744
 Examiner: Beisner, W.H.
 Docket No.: DR-332J

Dear Sir:

Enclosed is a RESPONSE in reply to the Office Action mailed November 5, 2003 in the subject application. Also enclosed pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.97(c) are an Information Disclosure Citation in an Application, Form PTO-A820, copies of four (4) references and a check for \$180.00 for the fee pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.17(p). The applicant notes that two of the four references, namely the Vantrees and Vincent Poor references, were previously cited but not acknowledged by the Examiner.

If for any reason this RESPONSE is found to be INCOMPLETE, or if at any time it appears that a TELEPHONE CONFERENCE with counsel would help advance prosecution, please telephone the undersigned or his associates, collect in Waltham, Massachusetts at (781) 890-5678.

If any payment during prosecution is found to be incorrect, please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to my Deposit Account No. 09-0002. A copy of this letter is enclosed for use by the Finance Branch in the event that it is necessary to make any charge or credit to my deposit account.

In addition, pursuant to Rule 1.136(a)(3), the Office is hereby authorized to treat any future reply requiring an extension of time as incorporating a request therefor. Also, any request

Commissioner for Patents
January 16, 2004
Page 2

or Petition for an Extension of Time notwithstanding an inadvertent reference in the Petition to a shorter period of time is to be treated as requesting the appropriate length of time.

Kindly acknowledge receipt of the foregoing by returning the enclosed self-addressed postcard.

Sincerely,

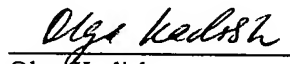


Thomas E. Thompson, Jr.
Reg. No. 47,136

TET:ok
Enclosures

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on January 16, 2004.


Olga Kadish